

program segments received from the host and includes mechanisms for interactively navigating among the program segments.

Column 29, lines 55-65 disclose:

As a consequence, by the simple expedient of skipping from subject announcement to subject announcement, a user can locate a particular subject of interest. For example, if a given program compilation as defined by the Selections file (having the format illustrated at 351 in FIG. 5) contains one hour of programming divided into 8 different subjects collections, the user can quickly locate a subject of interest by skipping from subject announcement to subject announcement until a subject of interest is announced, at which time the player is allowed to proceed to the next level in the hierarchy, a “topic” announcement for the first program segment in that subject collection.

The movement from the “subject” announcement level to the “topic” announcement level in the hierarchy of the subject collections in Logan et al. is not the same as “setting entire audio data which corresponds to one audio program at the highest hierarchy and describing the audio features in metadata in order from higher to lower hierarchies,” as recited in claim 1 of the instant application.

Logan et al. also does not disclose describing “at least one audio segment corresponding to the “key stream,” “key event” or “key object,” as recited in claims 13-15, respectively, of the present invention.

Logan et al. also fails to disclose describing a “value indicating level of the feature types,” where the “feature type is any of a shot, a key audio clip, a key word, a key note, or a key sound...,” as recited in claim 18 of the instant application.

Logan et al. fails to disclose a “description scheme” for describing metadata. The Examiner refers to “hierarchy” disclosed in Logan et al. However, it should be noted that it is merely a hierarchy layered by a subject (category) or topic. Thus, it is totally different from a hierarchy layered by an audio feature as disclosed in the present invention.

Concerning the rejection of claims 1 and 2, as mentioned above, Logan et al. fails to disclose an audio program description scheme for hierarchically describing an audio feature in an audio program. Further, the hierarchy taught in Logan et al. can be illustrated as described below.

Constitutional units of the hierarchy consist of a subject description segment, a topic description segment and a program segment. A topic precedes each program segment. Additionally, program segments having similar topics are grouped as a subject; then the subject precedes the group. In the audio program playback equipment of Logan et al., during reproduction of the topic, skipped playback among subjects (Subject #1 → Subject #2) can be selected as well as skipped playback among topics (Topic #1-1 → Topic #2-2). In the present invention, the program segment that corresponds to the program segment of Logan et al. is set as an uppermost layer, and the program segment is layered with smaller units continuing in their meaning such as an audio scheme or an audio shot. Moreover, the present invention is not directed to a reproducing method of an audio program, but rather to describing an audio feature as metadata. Further, the topic and the subject in Logan et al. are separately created for explaining the program segment and the group. In contrast, an audio scheme and an audio shot or the like in

the present invention is constituted as a part of an original audio program.

Subject #1	Topic #1-1	Program Segment #1-1	Topic #1-2	Program Segment #1-2	...
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Subject #2	Topic #2-1	Program Segment #2-1	Topic #2-2	Program Segment #2-2	...
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Concerning the rejection of claim 3, “a session schedule which identifies an ordered sequence...” discloses that “session schedules (a schedule of which program segments are reproduced by an audio program playback equipment)” is merely an ordered sequence, and is thus not relevant to “(a hierarchy) identifier” disclosed in claim 3 of the present invention. The identifier in the present invention refers to an “audio program” or “audio scene”.

Concerning the rejection of claim 4, identifiers illustrated in FIG. 7 of Logan et al. do not indicate an identifier of a layered segment.

Concerning the rejection of claims 5 and 6, according to column 38, lines 50-54 of Logan et al., there is no disclosure concerning contents pointed out by the Examiner. The contents described therein merely describe that a user can know the duration of audio programs not yet reproduced during when the audio program playback equipment reproduces the audio program based on a session schedule. The above-described content of Logan et al. is different from the concept of a duration for describing an information of an audio segment as metadata as disclosed in the present invention.

In addition, in column 21, lines 26-28 of Logan et al., there is a description referred to by the Examiner. However, the field of duration in Logan et al. merely indicates a duration of a program segment. Thus, Logan et al. fails to teach, mention or suggest a scheme for describing a duration in each hierarchy of an audio scene and an audio shot. Logan et al. further fails to disclose that the duration is expressed by a time code.

Concerning the rejection of claims 13-15 and 18, column 30, line 60 to column 31, line 11 of Logan et al., highlighted passages are indicated by a byte position relative from a point of the program segment. In the present invention, an audio segment corresponding to a key stream, a key event and a key object is described as metadata with a combination of a start time code and an end time code, or a combination of the start time code and a duration.

In summary, the audio program playback equipment disclosed in Logan et al. comprises a highlight play mode pointed out by the Examiner. However, the highlight is merely described as “key points of any program segment.” Therefore, Logan et al. fails to disclose the following features of the present invention:

- Characteristic stream (key stream) in the event that the audio data is constituted by a plurality of channels or tracks;
- Characteristic event in the audio data (key event); and
- Characteristic audio sources in the audio data (key object).

Further, concerning claim 18, there is no disclosure in Logan et al. of a feature type or value indicating levels.

As described in column 30, line 60 to column 31, line 11 in Logan et al., highlighted passages are indicated by a byte position relative from a point of the program segment. In the present invention, an audio segment corresponding to a key stream, a key event and a key object is described as metadata with a combination of a start time code and an end time code, or a combination of a start time code and a duration.

Thus, the 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) rejection of claims 1-6, 13-15 and 18 should be reconsidered and withdrawn.

The Examiner has allowed claims 7, 9, 16-17 and 19-26, and has indicated that claims 10-12 would be allowed if amended to be in independent form.

Applicants do not understand this assertion regarding claims 10-12, because claims 10-12 each depend from claim 9, which has been allowed.

In view of the aforementioned remarks, claims 1-7 and 9-26 are in condition for allowance, which action, at an early date, is requested.


If, for any reason, it is felt that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney at the telephone number indicated below to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

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Response to Office Action dated March 21, 2006

In the event that this paper is not timely filed, applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. Please charge any fees for such an extension of time and any other fees which may be due with respect to this paper, to Deposit Account No. 01-2340.

Respectfully submitted,

ARMSTRONG, KRATZ, QUINTOS,
HANSON & BROOKS, LLP


William L. Brooks

Attorney for Applicant
Reg. No. 34,129

WLB/ak
Atty. Docket No. 001615
Suite 1000
1725 K Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20006
(202) 659-2930



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